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SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

In the interest of full disclosure, the following items are herewith identified in Form PTO-1449 and a copy of the same is hereby provided, for the convenience of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed before the mailing date of the first official action.

FOREIGN PATENTS

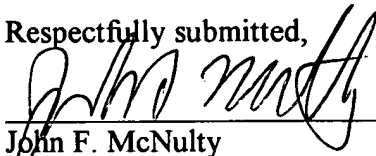
(AL) **German Patent No. 30 27 751 C2**, Lothar Flogel, dated February 18, 1982. Relevance is the disclosed in this document has been developed in order to plate glass plates with nickel, the nickel layer being very evenly thick on glass plates. With reference to the figures in this document the device consist of an electrically nonconducting fixing frame 1 which is especially U shaped and which serves to stably hold this glass plate 9 in the electrolyte liquid and to electrically contact the glass plate at a cathodically polarized contacting rail 2. Between the contacting rail 2 and the counterpart 3 are arranged clamps 4 in order to electrically contact the glass plates. Furthermore there are holding tongs 10. At the inner side of the fixing frame there are provided screens 16.

(AM) **German Patent No. 37 26 571 C1**, Hans Hofmann, dated March 23, 1989. Relevance is in this document a holdings means for printed circuit boards (PCB's) for electroplating plants is disclosed. This holdings means also to screen off electrical field lines to even out the thickness of metal to be deposited. With respect to the figures in this

document the holding frame consist of a roof-shaped screen 2 with a reversed ridge 1, the screen being held in a slit 4 at a holding means 6 via means 3. In fig. 1 this holding means is shown in a perspective view, in fig. 2 it is shown in a front view and in fig. 3 it is shown from the lower side.

(AN) **German Patent No. 41 06 733 C2**, Kurt Astor et al, dated September 3, 1992. Relevance is this document again discloses a device for holding an electrically contacting (PCB's) for electroplating. In order to even out the thickness of metal to be deposited there have been provided screens at the device. With respect to the figures the device consists of clamps 9 which are fastened to a holding means 4. The clamps also serve to electrically contact the PCB's 8. The PCB's are dipped into the electrolyte liquid, its level being designated by numeral 3. To the holding means fastened two stamps 5 which are lowered into the bath when the PCB's are lowered into the bath or are removed from the bath if the PCB's are also removed from the bath (refer to also to arrow 7 in fig.3). Further there is a screen 10 into which the lower part 8' of the PCB's enter by lowering it into the bath. The screen 10 is located in an upper position (refer to fig. 3 and 4). The screen is lowered into the bath by means of the stamps until the PCB has reached its final position. Then also the screens are located near the bottom of the bath container. The screens prevent electrical field lines from accumulating at this area at the PCB's lifting bodies 11 are used to move the screens upwards to provide the device with loads 22 which via suitable means 23 drive the screens upwards (refer to fig. 5.)

Respectfully submitted,



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